



ANTI-GP39 ANTIBODIES AND USES THEREFOR

Abstract

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Antibodies that bind a protein gp39 (also referred to as CD40 ligand) are disclosed. Preferably, the antibodies are monoclonal antibodies of an IgG1 isotype and bind human gp39. In a preferred embodiment, an antibody of the invention binds an epitope recognized by a monoclonal antibody 24-31, produced by a hybridoma 24-31 (ATTC Accession No. 10 HB11712) or binds an epitope recognized by a monoclonal antibody 89-76, produced by a hybridoma 89-76 (ATCC Accession No. HB11713). Pharmaceutical compositions comprising the antibodies of the invention are also disclosed. The antibodies of the invention are useful for inhibiting B cell proliferation and differentiation, T cell responses and for inducing T cell tolerance. Nucleic acid molecules encoding anti-gp39 antibodies, or portions 15 thereof, as well as expression vectors and host cells incorporating said nucleic acid molecules, are also encompassed by the invention.